

ABSTRACT OF THE DISCLOSURE

To facilitate handing of headers for Internet-transmissible packets, a radio access network sends to a mobile station (MS) a message which downloads configuration options for each of corresponding plural header adaptation strategies. The mobile station (MS) elects one of the plural header adaptation strategies and includes the elected strategy in a return message, whereby the radio access network configures a radio bearer for packets to be transmitted between the radio access network and the mobile station. In a first illustrated mode of implementation of the invention, the radio access network is a GSM/EDGE radio access network, with the downloading message being a radio bearer setup message and the return message sent from the mobile station to the radio access network being a radio bearer setup complete message. In a second illustrated mode of implementation of the invention, the message that downloads configuration options for each of plural header adaptation strategies is a handover command message for handing over control of the mobile station from a source radio access network to a target radio access network. In this second mode, the message which informs which of the plural strategies is elected is a handover complete message. The plural header adaptation strategies can include header compression (useful, e.g., for a multimedia service); header removal (useful, e.g., for a spectrum efficient voice packet voice bearer that reuses codec-specific channel coding); and no header adaptation.